



**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
MIDDLETOWN CONNECTICUT
JULY 31, 2014**

Special Meeting: The Special Meeting of the Common Council was held in the Council Chamber of the Municipal Building on Thursday, July 31, 2014 at 6 p.m.

Present

Deputy Mayor Robert P. Santangelo, Councilwoman Hope P. Kasper, Councilman Grady L. Faulkner, Jr., Councilman Carl R. Chisem, Councilman Sebastian N. Giuliano, Councilwoman Sandra Russo Driska, Councilman David Bauer

Absent

Mayor Daniel T. Drew, corporation Counsel Daniel B. Ryan, Council Members Thomas J. Serra, Mary A. Bartolotta, Hope P. Kasper, Gerald E. Daley, and James B. Streeto, and Councilwoman Deborah Kleckowski.

Also Present

Geen Thazhampallath, Director of Parking, Welles Guilmartin, William Garrity, David Scantilla, Eldon Bailey, Roger Beliveau and six members of the public.

1. Mayor calls meeting to order.

The Acting Chair declares the call a legal call and the meeting a legal meeting.

2. Workshop Opens

The Acting Chair opens the workshop at 6:02 p.m. Mr. Thazhampallath states the workshop was requested at the July Council meeting when they presented a Bid Waiver Request to purchase kiosks to replace the current gate system known by Ammano. We shared with you the problems we have had and shared a letter that we received from Wayne Bartolotta, Central Dispatch. If you have questions, you can call upon Eldon Bailey from IT and he asks that Roger Beliveau, his operating manager and Welles Guilmartin, Chair of Parking Advisory say a few words. The last piece is the vendors, David Scantilla and Bill Garrity. Mr. Garrity has been instrumental in developing our department; the previous firm helped us purchase the billing and ticketing equipment we have used. Our revenues have taken off and we were averaging 75% of tickets paid and that is a 25% increase. He has helped us pave the way to be a modern effective department. Welles Guilmartin, Parking Advisory Commission Chair states they were asked to look at some of the technology in place where it was operating. We have, in the past, purchased systems of technology; some of them worked and some did not. The Commission wanted to see machines in operation. They went to Greenwich, Darien and Norwalk; they are larger authorities than we are and have the same problems. There is definitely a movement to newer technology and what we are proposing is a license plate being used to identify the car that is parking. Pay and display is the most common method. New Haven's pay and display was in trouble as far as public awareness. This is a simpler system, but you have to know your plate number. The problems they are having with the card system will be eliminated. There are other advantages with this technology. The gates have been a problem since they went in and we have to look at a different method of collecting money at Melilli and the Arcade. As part of our meetings, they did approve the use of the money to purchase this type of system. There have been thoughts to refer it back, but it was unanimous to go forward with this type of system. Mr. Thazhampallath thanks Roger for his outstanding service to the City. He has put in several nights babysitting our machines. He and Fred are the two employees who encounter these machines sometimes on a nightly basis. Roger Beliveau, Operations Manager, states they have had the system for three years; there are ticket issues or machines are not reading tickets or gate issues or money or credit cards getting stuck in the machines. If a Credit Card is stuck, they have to come in. They have access to the gates from an iPad and on occasion, they can raise the gates from home. When restaurants close late in the evening, some cars crash through the gates; on July 4 a delivery was made and a truck knocked over a gate. There has been one issue after another the last three years and he is excited about this new technology. He went to West Hartford this last week and they are excited about the programs in their town. Mr. Thazhampallath asks if there are any questions, and if you don't, he is happy to turn it over to the vendors.

Councilman Giuliano thanks him and Parking Advisory and your office has done its homework on this project and we had issues with the existing system and I will take a share of the blame

because I was around but it doesn't work the way it was presented. The issue was the privacy issue; when you punch in the license plate number, where is it going and who can possibly get to it and see it. Mr. Thazhampallath turns it over to the vendors. Chair Santangelo not only who sees it but what information is collected. Mr. Garrity and Mr. Scantilla come to the podium. Mr. Garrity states to speak specifically to data security; the License plate becomes the paid parking credential. It is using it as the paid parking credential. They put in the license plate number, pay and leave. No registered personal data is in the machine. The only data is stored is the license plate. It is stored on the hosting system. It resides on a server that has a periodic Security audit. They go through and look at where a security breakdown could be and we have to pass this test annually. It is scrutinized every year. Councilman Faulkner states so you are saying it resides with a third party vendor. Mr. Garrity just like the ticketing service does today and the only people with access is the parking service staff. They can just see the number of plates that have paid and the license plate number. Councilman Giuliano asks who can get that data. Mr. Garrity only the city of Middletown parking personnel. Mr. Thazhampallath states here in Middletown when they while in the police department, they could get to the data and take the number and go to dispatch and run the plate and since we are no longer part of the department we can no longer run license plates and get the information. That is against the law. Councilman Giuliano asks if a national security organization says they want to see the data from Oct. to Dec. would you give them the data. Mr. Thazhampallath responds he would refer that to city attorney and abide by the law. If it is a national security issue and I was told I have to turn it over, I would. Councilman Giuliano asks you heard Roger talk about currency getting stuck in the machines and cash, how often does that happen on these machines. Mr. Garrity replies the customer doesn't lose possession of the credit card, he holds on to it. Bills are not as consistent as a card or coin. If a bill gets jammed, the coin and credit card slots still work. Councilman Giuliano asks how quickly it can be cleared. Mr. Garrity replies they open the mechanism, they pop a device by pushing a button remove the bill and slide it back in. There is a coin drawer and bill drawer; they can take it out and replace them. Mr. Garrity states everything is modular and a component can be replaced easily. They are well manufactured. Mr. Guilmartin states one concern was a cover or shelter for the machine and down in Darien they are outside the Train station. They are happy with the machines and take the weather very well. That was one of his concerns. Mr. Garrity states the shelter is for the patrons. Councilman Giuliano states he was reviewing the handout and he noticed they are being used for on street parking; are you considering getting rid of meters. Mr. Thazhampallath states in the long run. The design and the width of stalls having a meter in front of each space works. The cost of maintaining a meter is \$700. Cost wise we could bring our budget down operationally by bringing the costs down. West Hartford did take out their meters and are using this system. In parking industry it is a multispace meter. There are three ways to pay: pay and display; that won't work for us. Pay by space; he would have to number each space that indicates each one. It is impractical because Public Works has to plow the lot. One of the towns, they have people on standby to plow the lot to keep spaces open. Pay by license plate is new technology is the best avenue to follow. My predecessor was the right hire at that time to bring the right technologies to us. They have produced areas of success. I can foresee our operational cost decrease with this technology. I pinpointed lines I could remove. He sees it potentially moving to Main Street. He would like these in the new parking garage in the new one. In order to run the garage, you would need 3 - 4 people as cashiers and people there until 2 a.m. for maintenance. If I am a union representative four part time people is really two full time people. To prevent that cost structure is to put these kiosks on every floor to reduce the input of man hours and personnel costs that would come to the City. You could drive in park in the garage and pay and be on the way. You need to take your receipt. It is that simple. My mindset is to save now and set us up for future savings.

Councilman Faulkner states how does it work; you are talking about license plate and I could punch in someone else's. Mr. Garrity you wouldn't want to punch in someone else's plate because you wouldn't have paid for parking. Out of sleep mode, it says pay by plate. After they put in their number, the rates come up and they can select the number of hours to park and it prompts for payment. I pay by credit card; it is validating it and processes the card. It is real time. The receipt falls into the receipt cup and they just take it with them. It does show my plate number; if I get a citation, it is issued to a vehicle and sits on the window. Let's say it got a ticket, I could call and say I received it in error and let them know I have my receipt. The license plate data gets sent to the enforcement app and on the android they can pull up who paid and who hasn't and then ticket those who haven't paid. If you move to the reader on a car, they just drive up and down the rows, cameras mounted on a car for enforcing. Mr. Garrity and Mr. Scantilla show the Android technology and you take a picture and it reads against the database and it is color coded with green paid, yellow almost expired and red you have not paid. Mr. Thazhampallath states he is holding off the camera reader; when the garage comes on line, he would use the Android. We are using technology to our advantage. Mr. Garrity states there is a shift moving to this type of modality. It will become the common place way to pay for parking. Companies and cities are removing gates and using centralized paying stations. You will save cost on permanent infrastructure. Pay by license plate, I am leaving with that credential. The next person has to pay and there is zero opportunity to piggyback on unexpired parking time. Councilman Faulkner states how you pay. Mr. Garrity once I pay, I have until the expiration time to park. Mr. Thazhampallath states they visited other towns and we talked extensively and it is not one size fits all. In Darien, they only use credit cards and they have technology you can use your cellphone to charge your time and go. We thought about our community; we have a high rate of daily visitors for the courthouse use and people may not have a credit or debit card. We thought about it and our community and users who do not have credit cards and we need the

ability to pay with bills and coins. You can pay with a single and a five and all the language you see will help. Councilman Faulkner is trying to get an idea how it works. Mr. Thazhampallath states everything you see in Melilli will be removed. There will be no gates. You would drive into the parking lot; there will be signs that you have to go to the kiosk to pay. You go to the kiosk follow the prompts, pay and you are done. Right now if you drove into the lot you would take a magnetized strip card and put it into your pocket. When you come back you go into your pocket and if it is near your cell phone it might not work. We ask you to pay at a kiosk take it out go back to your car and then at the gate insert it to get the gate to go up. You are asking people to do too much. Councilman Faulkner states there is no gate. You come back and it is time to leave; what do you do. Mr. Thazhampallath you get into your car. Let's say you paid two hours; if you are below two hours, you leave. He will have to change enforcement. Roger will use the cellphone device and it will tell us who paid and if you were past the two hours, you will be ticketed. Councilman Faulkner states you will have someone take pictures. Mr. Garrity states it is taking it but not keeping it; it is OCR technology. It takes the plate to read the characters. Councilman Faulkner states it is in the database here. Mr. Thazhampallath I am not storing it. Councilman Faulkner states if it is over how you will track them down. Mr. Thazhampallath states he will issue a ticket on the spot. We have a handheld device that issues the ticket and it is working and it has to integrate and they have a partnership with the company that we use. He will use the camera to take the picture and we can cross it over to the enforcement tool and it can spit out a ticket. He can do a 10 second download to see the tickets given in one day. He will not add staff. Mr. Guilmartin states if you happen to be at 2:05 and drive out of the lot, it is our loss we didn't get you. Right now, we have to change our manner of enforcement. There are plusses and minuses. As a user of parking, the enhanced experience of going to a kiosk paying and leaving is an enhancement and there are options beyond this. If you were to put a kiosk at the Chamber Office and can't get back to the lot, you can up your time from the kiosk there instead of going back to the lot. You don't have to go all the way back to the specific lot especially if kiosks are all over and you can use anyone of them. Mr. Thazhampallath states from our perspective we can use them 24/7 and we get requests from locals for parking and we say park on Main after 6 p.m. We can start selling residential parking in the lot overnight and charge them a fee per month and we have the ability with enforcement tools to offer that. Mr. Thazhampallath states two other pieces are customer friendly; we have fancy equipment for enforcement and what if Councilwoman Driska wants to add time; you can enter your phone number at the time you pay and the machine will send a text message usually 15 minutes before it is up and you can send a text message to up your time. A business approached me in a lot, we have permit holders and someone said they want to pay for their customer's parking and they may get a \$10 ticket and they would get upset. I don't have a way to validate parking; if I can put kiosks up, we can structure it so they pay for the parking of their customers. The makeshift is we will give the passes and verify, but this would make it instantaneous. Councilman Chisem asks about monthly parking. Mr. Thazhampallath states the permit holder waives in front of the machine and the gate goes up; that will go away. We are working with the vendor and use a module and with license plate reader it is reading against the database and we can say this is a monthly parker because your license plate becomes your permit and he will use hang tag to have a visual of the monthly parkers. Mr. Thazhampallath states some of the concerns from the last meeting were questions about the license plate; the police department's use is much different than my use and we would have to as a town write policies on how we use the data.

Councilman Faulkner states that is a big issue. We need to have a privacy policy even with the Police, they haven't answered questions to me what they do with the information. We need to know where it is kept and we set how long it is held can we set that. Mr. Garrity replies it does say in the system as a transaction; it is not sold and it is housed on our servers on your behalf. The folder is for Middletown. Mr. Thazhampallath states I asked the license plate reader company if they can purge data. They said yes; it can instantaneously erase it and it does not need to be stored. Mr. Thazhampallath explains what other towns use it for. That is not what we are using it for. Councilman Faulkner states there are a lot of conversations about revenue and there was a question if they are municipal or for profit. You can lose insurance protection as a municipality. Councilman Faulkner states is it possible to have it as a prefix or suffix. Mr. Thazhampallath is not sure of the question. Councilman Faulkner asks if you use it as data storage to use prefix or suffix to mask the number. Mr. Garrity responds the system does not do that. It is just a plate number and doesn't cross reference any other system in the city. Councilman Faulkner states it can. Mr. Garrity no; it doesn't leave our service. Councilman Faulkner states because you do what you do, but from a legislator's point of view, what regulations should we have to go along with implementation. Mr. Thazhampallath would recommend putting in place that if we are notified that our data had been sold our relationship ends; those parameters could be in contractual language.

Councilman Bauer asks the proposed resolution under fiscal impact you start to talk about changing rate schedule and the resolution has n rate changes. Mr. Thazhampallath it is from the ordinance. Councilman Bauer states I have a good idea; he was going to ask about enforcement; someone goes over the time and that will be enforced by a human being seeing the vehicle and license plate and fixing a ticket. Mr. Thazhampallath yes, just as we do on Main Street. Councilman Bauer states I have concern about and I know in our society you get some convenience and you get it by trading your privacy and one thing you didn't talk about whenever someone gets the app, isn't the cell phone, credit card and license plate connected on the server. Mr. Garrity responds it is not app based. It is text message based. If you paid with credit card, the last screen on the kiosk, if you add your cell phone number, the machine sends out the text

message and if you reply it bills back to your credit card. It is through secure servers and at no point is that shared or stored on an app on someone's phone. Councilman Bauer has some concerns about the public perception. At the introduction, you said the public will embrace this and he is not sure how people would perceive this. In this lot, one of the understandings for city employees is free parking as part of employment and they would be in a data base one way or another and would they get the perk all over town, seven days a week. Mr. Thazhampallath replies permit parking is for certain locations and for enforcement areas, Melilli is a zone and I am opening that zone and the permits assigned to that zone. Councilman Bauer as far as the resolution, you answered all my red flag questions. Councilwoman Russo Driska has questions about security for Eldon. In terms of license plate technology, what is your feeling about that; is it secure. Mr. Baily states he has to believe it is secure. For me it is a series of numbers there is no other private data. We are doing that now when we ticket.

Councilman Faulkner states we may need regulations for that period. He states we don't do that now and it may not necessarily mean it is okay. There is data we collect and have rules and regulations for how long we keep it. Councilwoman Driska comments we do it now. Mr. Thazhampallath states when they started issuing parking tickets, license plate is the way we keep track. Councilwoman Driska states we need policy in place and how long it is retained and I like the idea if sold not only does the contract end, but there is a heavy fine. She has had information stolen from Target and Michaels; we can't completely stop that and we need to be smart on how we do our parking. I have used several systems across the country and it is a culture. Wherever I go, parking is done different in different parts of the country. I understand the concerns about the costs and data inputting. It is not reinventing the wheel and has been done for a decade in some towns. Mr. Thazhampallath states we handle credit card transactions daily; we handle thousands a month. Acting Chair Santangelo states the question was asked about where the data goes and there is no access and it is on your server. No one has access so no information can steal it. Mr. Garrity states your local staff are the only people who will have access. We go through a security audit yearly. PCI Certification takes the liability off the city of Middletown and shifts the liability to the vendor. Mr. Thazhampallath this company has the security in place.

Councilman Giuliano right now the only thing the system knows is the marker plate and does not cross reference to any database. Mr. Garrity that is correct. Councilman Giuliano the enforcement hits the plate and the number comes up and shows if they paid. What people are worried about is if it doesn't exist it may, where you can cross reference the information. We want to make sure if your company decides that you will provide that capability that you make us aware of that decision. Mr. Thazhampallath states we are not part of the police department and I cannot tap that information; the police can and they have requested license plate reads for law enforcement reasons. You need to ask them the parameters they will use it. I do not have access to correlate a license plate to a person. Councilman Chisem states you summed it up and I want to be comfortable with the license plate and it is the way things are and I wanted it secure the information cannot be used. He would like the contract language in place. Mr. Thazhampallath states he had a conversation with Town Manager in Darian access to their contracts to copy that. We will negotiate the contract. Councilman Bauer he has listened carefully and agree with the spirit of Councilman Faulkner about the policy and it not be some internal city hall thing; it is touching on a policy that the Council has approval on. It has been thrown around that authorized city employees can look at this. You have data and then a hit and run on Washington street they will ask for data to look for possible suspects; the policy we should know there is a lot of surveillance and it has gone way too far. I would feel more comfortable that we have something more socially responsible and the data always be secure and if the FBI came to you with national security level, you would give it to them and not come to us.

3. Workshop Closes.

The Acting Chair, seeing no further comments closes the workshop at 7:20 p.m.

4. Meeting adjourned.

Councilman Sebastian N. Giuliano reads and moves to adjourn. Councilwoman Sandra Russo Driska seconds the motion. The vote is unanimous and the Acting Chair adjourns the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

ATTEST:

MARIE O. NORWOOD
COMMON COUNCIL CLERK